SLAVE LAKE

One Person’s Perspective – Tom Cox VE6TOX

DISCLAIMER

- You will <u>never</u> know the whole story
- One person's perspective – and I never got to Slave Lake
- Some information is anecdotal – like the yelling
- This is NOT about the response in Slave Lake

TERMINOLOGY

- Canadianisms, eh? Km, Celsius, loonie
- Province = State
- SRD – Sustainable Resource Development
- AEMA – Alberta Emergency Management Agency
- SOLE – State of Local Emergency
- SOE – State of Provincial Emergency
- POC – Provincial Operations Centre
- Reception Centre – Evacuee Shelter

MY BACKGROUND

MY BACKGROUND

- 30 years as a wine expert
- 15 years in amateur radio
- 4 years as a trainer with AEMA
- 6 years as a restaurant bus boy

SITUATION REPORT

- Time this!
- Incident
- Response
- Provincial Government
- Amateur Radio
- How much time did that take?
- 5W+H
- Now you know more than I did!

PREVIOUSLY

- 1968 wildfire approaches town
- 1988 flooded
- 2001 Chisolm fire nearby destroys 10 homes
- 200? Fire stopped near town – fire chief and deputy both away that day
- Slave Lake has a major fire air base

THE PROVINCES WATCHES

- Flooding issues in Southern Alberta
- Significant pipeline break and spill
- 24 hour monitoring of fire and any other issues

TIMELINES

SATURDAY MAY 14

- 13:30 fire reported – SRD notified
- 16:00 EOC established at town hall
- 16:30 second large fire reported
- 20:00 limited evacuations
- Deployment of 2 AEMA field officers
- 22:30 SOLE declared
- It’s Saturday night….

SUNDAY MORNING

- 07:00 I'm called in, arrive for Level 2 activation
- 115 fires reported – 36 out of control
- Uncertainty over evacuations as some voluntary have started
- 3 fires around Slave Lake, the Municipal District of Lesser Slave River and Sawridge Indian Band

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

- 13:00 – 14:00 EOC briefed by Fire Chief
- Interrupted by phone and pager
- Highway 2 and 88 closed – all 3 escape routes
- Wind over 60 mph – grounds aircraft and starts ember attack
- Reports of fire in town
- 7,000 people trapped

SUNDAY EVENING

- Highway 2 opens – incredible tales of evacuation
- Over 7,000 people leave in multiple directions
- Back-up EOC with one phone line
- Exhausted fire crews from fighting from Saturday afternoon on
- Loss of communications
- Evacuees showing up in numerous towns

MONDAY, MAY 16 - ROUGHLY

- Every government ministry active
- Calgary Fire Department – 362 miles
- Scribe #1 issue
- Where are the reception centres?
- Cooperation – Public Affairs Bureau
- Athabasca and Wood Buffalo Fires

TUESDAY, MAY 17 - ROUGHLY

- List of evacuation centres
- Loss of critical infrastructure – EOC, fire hall, hospital, library, RCMP station, radio station and telephone exchange
- Continuing fire fighting efforts
- Burnout of key personnel
- Deployment of IMT to EOC
- Support for evacuation centres

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18 – OR SO

- Recovery issues
- Continued fire-fighting efforts
- Damage assessment issue
- Evacuee financial support issues
- Re-entry plan issues
- Town financial support issues
- Smith Alberta!

THURSDAY / FRIDAY

- Fire fighters sleeping on floors
- No hot water, services for personnel
- Who is essential?
- Scribe #2 issue
- Smith, Alberta!
- Loss of the pilot

WHERE ARE WE AT?

- 12,000 – 15,000 people evacuated
- 40% of town destroyed
- No power, no water, hospital,
- Hundred or possibly thousands without homes
- So why no pictures?
- I did without – so you can do without (for a few more minutes)

IN THE POC

Province of Alberta Operations Centre

SERVICE ALBERTA
643-0624

12:35
LOCAL
13:35
CENTRAL
15:35
ATLANTIC
18:35
GMT
GOALS
1. People
2. Property
3. Environment
Economy
ALBERTA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
Alberta

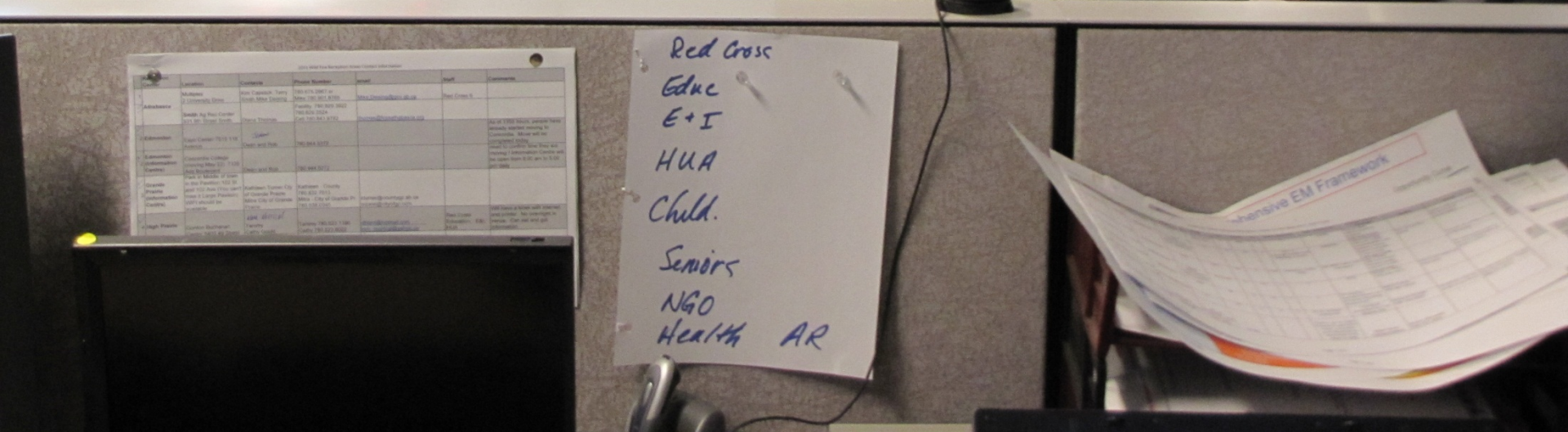
Fire 056 - SW. Slave Lake
Fire 065 - SE. Slave Lake
Little Buffalo
Slave Lake
Estimates of Evacuees
Evacuations Requirements
Amanda to call Brice
Randy.
Lake - follow-up
Conference Call

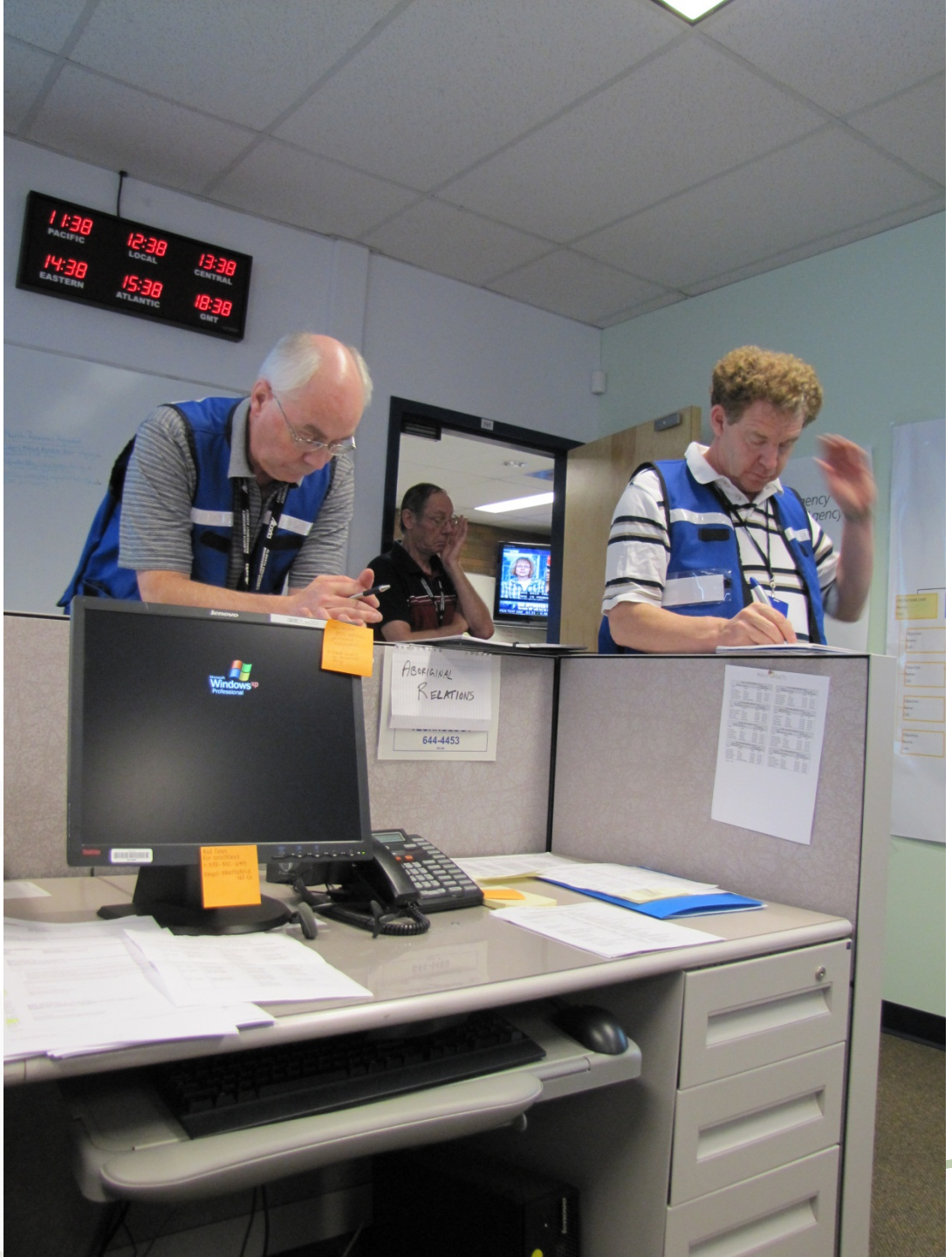
Mutual Aid Contact Zones
SERVICE ALBERT

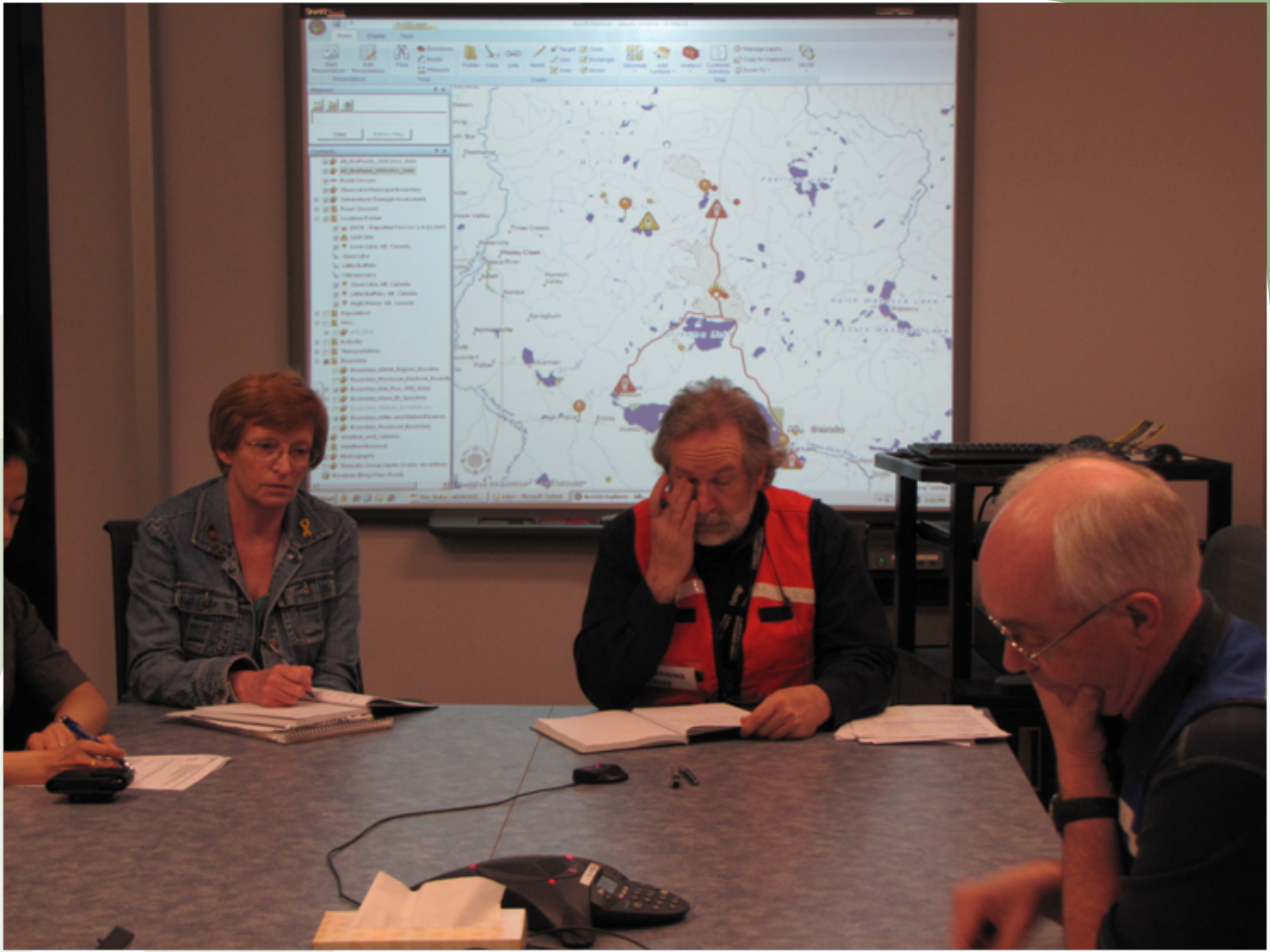
OPERATIONS
INCIDENT
COMMANDER

17:08
18:08
19:08
20:08
21:08
00:08
DANGER
HIGH VOLTAGE
NOTICE
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
PLANS CHIEF
422-2255
NING

Needs
Seperate evacs from those who can return home and those who can not.
Billets are coming forward.
Thursday - Accomodation lists must be very very accurate!
Health - Athabasca


Red Cross
Educ
E+I
HUA
Child.
Seniors
NGO
Health AR


11:38
PACIFIC
12:38
LOCAL
13:38
CENTRAL
14:38
EASTERN
15:38
ATLANTIC
18:38
GMT
ABORIGINAL
RELATIONS
644-4453



SERVICE ALBERTA
643-0624
LOGISTICS SECTION

Gord B 780-913-8773
Slave Lake
Public Safety Canada Cell 232-9869
Edmonton
Jaun-assigned
Abey to
other strips ?
(Live Feed provided by Global May 18 10:00hrs & 14:00hrs).
Slave Lake EOC
Part of Slave Lake's Comms Plan.
Bowsers (Fuel Suppliers)
Walmart - Slave Lake
Juniction 2 & 44 - north 4km to rest area
FOR FILE
do not destroy
Lyreco
Log Chief + Cleaning
Update SOLE list
Transportation - Update road
Employment + Immigration
Confirm w Log Chief
Seek update on NGO
email: albertaartia

Todays POC Objectives
11/05/22 08:44
DO NOT ERASE
POC PROCESS
-Response
-Recovery
-Transition
-Long Term

Health issue Athabasca
Amanda, Nat & Stephanie
Contact Mike re
Smith R.C. Athos?
Directors visit Saturday
Room for E.O. 3 nights

0800 hrs - 2000hrs - 0500hrs

DAILY

MAY

0430-0515hrs : Handover to next shift

0900 hrs : Teleconference w/ Slave Lake EOC
(CMDs in Ops Centre)

10 30hrs : Information Bulletin (PAB) (MAYnoue to Noon)

1345 hrs : Round-table update

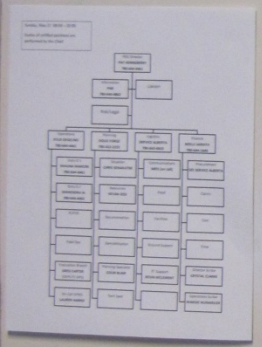
1500

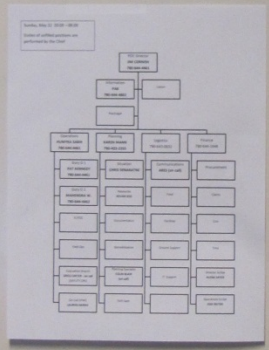
1800hrs : Teleconference #2 Slave Lake EOC

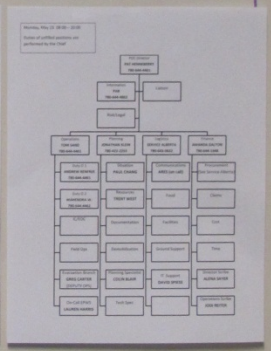
Teleconferen
with Slave La
enhance cat

1630-1715hrs : Handover to next shift

19:00 : SITREP # 2



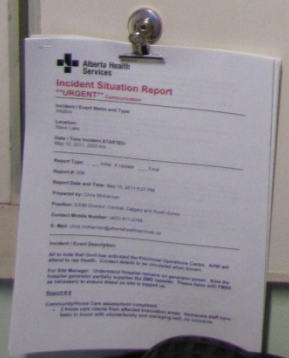




Bowsers (fuel suppliers)

→ Walmart - Slave Lake

↳ Junction 2 & 44 - north 4km to rest area



Alberta Health Services

Incident Situation Report

"URGENT" Communication

Incident / Event Name and Type

Location

Date / Time Incident STARTED

Report Type: ____ Initial ____ Update ____ Final

Report #:

Report Date and Time:

Prepared by:

Position:

Contact Mobile Number:

E-Mail:

Incident / Event Description

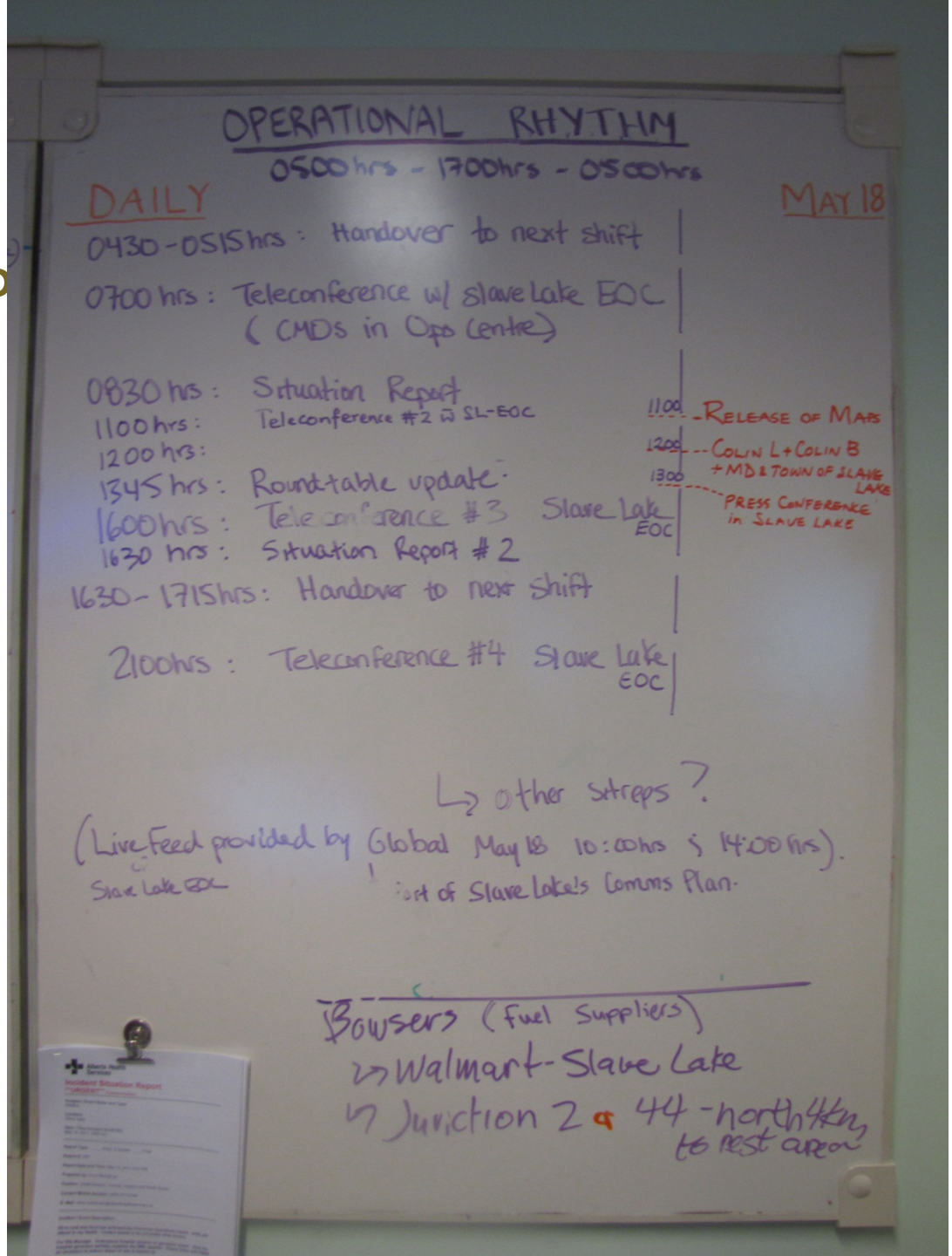
Board AB

Community/Home Care assessment completed:

- 1 home care client from affected evacuation area. Homecare staff have been in touch with client/family and managing well, no concerns

TITLE

- Key P


OPERATIONAL RHYTHM
0500 hrs - 1700hrs - 0500hrs
DAILY
MAY 18
0430-0515hrs : Handover to next shift
0700 hrs : Teleconference w/ Slave Lake EOC
(CMDs in Ops Centre)
0830 hrs : Situation Report
1100 hrs : Teleconference #2 w SL-EOC
1200 hrs :
1345 hrs : Roundtable update
1600 hrs : Teleconference #3 Slave Lake EOC
1630 hrs : Situation Report #2
1630-1715hrs : Handover to next shift
2100hrs : Teleconference #4 Slave Lake EOC
1100 RELEASE OF MAPS
1200 COLIN L + COLIN B + MD & TOWN OF SLAVE LAKE
1300 PRESS CONFERENCE in SLAVE LAKE
other strips ?
(Live Feed provided by Global May 18 10:00hrs & 14:00 hrs).
Slave Lake EOC
Part of Slave Lake's Comms Plan.
Bowsers (Fuel Suppliers)
Walmart - Slave Lake
Junction 2 & 44 - north 4km to rest area

May 16/17, 2011
Do Not Erase

Immed – 1-2
Short 3-10
Med 11-90
Longer up to 365

Action	Who	By
(2) Develop GoA Comm Plan for affected mun/citizens – all incl FN + Metis + embed PAB into task force.	PAB	Thurs
(1) Assess needs of evacuees + move into approp. sim. – out of reception centres.	Ext / POC	Thurs – Sat
(3) Create task force w GoA, Telus, FN, + comm reps. w auth to make dec. Short term, long term, ass T.O.R / membership. – steer / guide response & resulting issues	DMS, MLA	Who? When – next few days – ASMA
(2) Obtain assessment of the scope / scal of the issue		
(4) Id GoA policies to be hung in comm.		
• Sec. conditions to allow reconstr of public serv + critical infr (power, gas, water, tele) (~~accom, fed, safety~~)	police, fire, Telus	
• Rebuild public serv / critical infr.	work w AFCO teams	
• Financial support to impacted (at same time as support to evacuees)		
• Return to + reoccup of homes / businesses – cat – comm to evacuees – how will access with you. – how much / how	DRP HO.	plan for return. After flow of IDs.
• Longer-term reconstr of part / fully destr homes / businesses – mitigation strategy built into planning for reconstr. – need ins co. assist		
• ~~Plan for evacuees~~ corresp w all of the above		
• Train people.		
• Bring key PS partners together	– Telus AFCO Insurance Brown Ada	
• RECOP strategy – need to inv comm, MLAs local leadership		
• ~~Full time GoA task force w registry + presence in the com~~		

Carlsen 780-918-6230 (cell)
495-2881 (office)

COLIN LLOYD CELL 983
COLIN BLAIR 780-2
ED (with ↑) 780-91

Mark Eckley - 780-893-482

Evacuation Information

S.O.L.E
State of Local Emergency

Information Centres

Reception Centre Information

2011
Municipal Officials Directory

Updated May 20, 2011

Government of Alberta

Media Line

780-644486

Fire terminology

Information Bulletin

Alberta

Government of Alberta

Building a better Alberta

Phased re-entry into Slave Lake and area starts today

Essential services allowed to enter town first

News release

Slave Lake and area residents ready to rebuild community

Mayor Pilley-Kinsman and Premier Ganott welcome residents home

Starts Sat

Wildfire Damage

SLAVE LAKE	MD Lesser Slave
destroyed 284	destroyed 72
damaged 233	damaged 43

updated May 24/11

Tragic accident of fire-fighting helicopter near Slave Lake

Frank Prat

780-805-0860

UPDATED MAR MAY 21

Initial Community visits planned for displaced residents

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS 644-4362

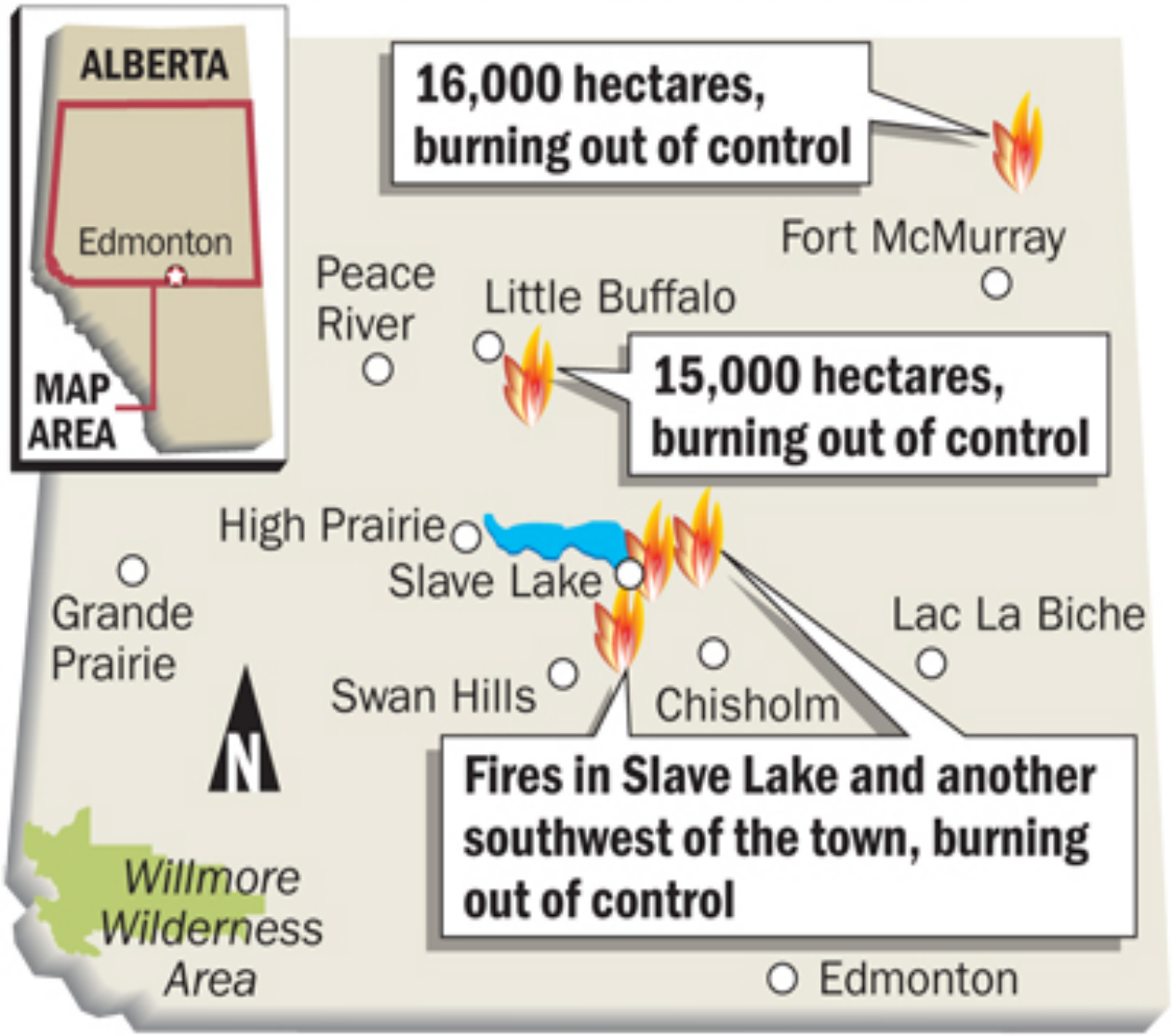
What You Need to Kn

LOOKING BACK THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE IN RECENT ALBERTA HISTORY

- Damage Map
- Finally!
- What was it like in Slave Lake?

IN SLAVE LAKE

NORTHERN ALBERTA FIRES



RICK COLVILLE, THE JOURNAL

- The EOC / Town Hall burns – courtesy 92.7 Lake FM

Evacuation – Mitchel Nelson

Shane O’Brien – Edmonton Journal

SKOOKUM'S
EMERGENCY SHUTOUT SYSTEMS
849-2440

POLICE
GRC

Shane O’Brian, Edmonton Journal

- First stop for hospital evacuation: Nova Inn

- Evacuation - Caezer Ng, The Lakeside Leader

Mike Kapusta

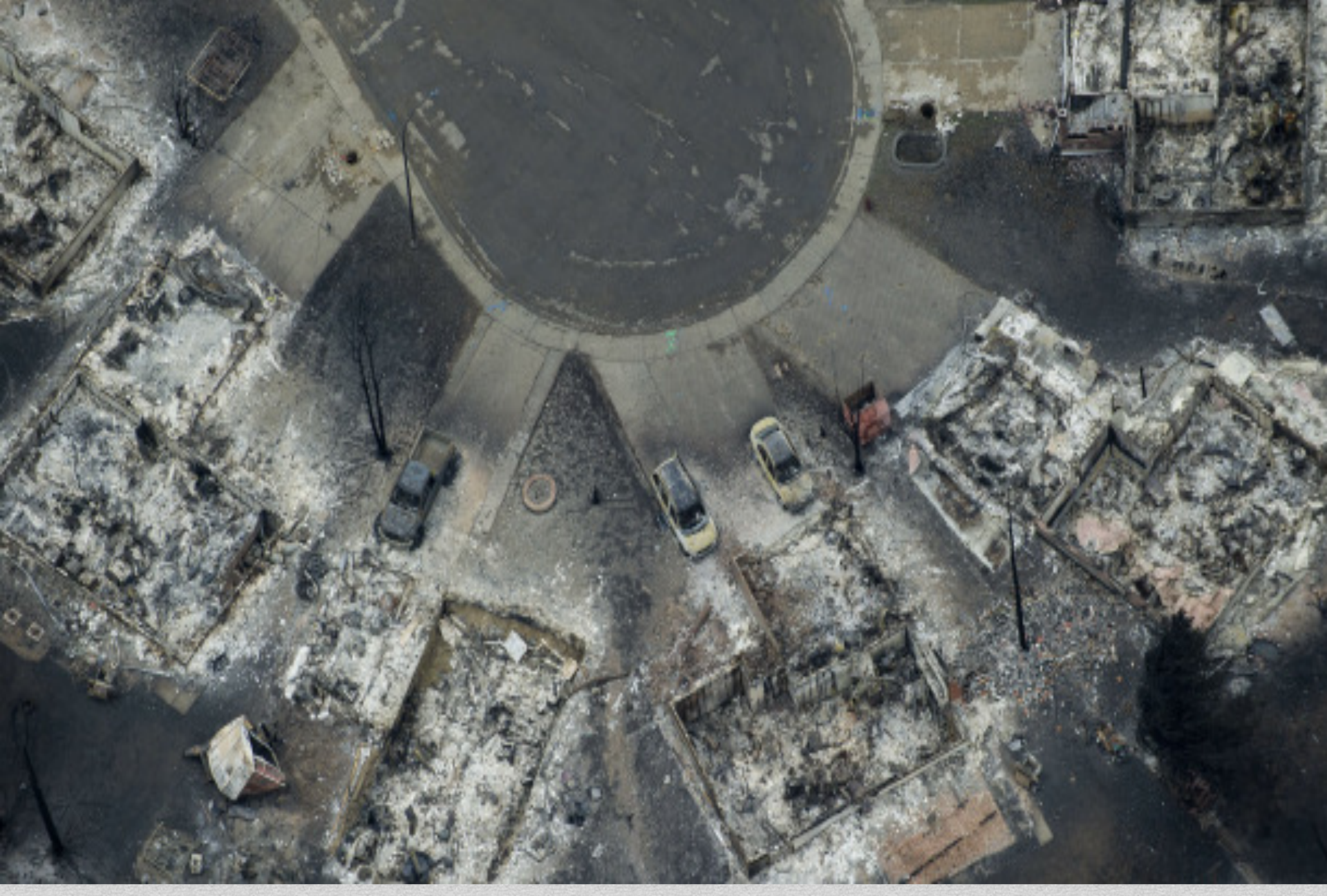
- Fire and Evacuation - unknown

David Blize

- One neighborhood - unknown

Shannon Dos Santos

- Hundreds of homes gone – Edmonton Journal



- Jimmy Jeong www.jimmyshoots.com

Todd Korol/Reuters

- Todd Korel, Reuters

- Todd Korel, Reuters

Jasmine Franklin, Edmonton Sun

- Athabasca RC – Jimmy Jeong for Globe and Mail

- Athabasca RC – Jimmy Jeong for Globe and Mail

- Trying to save a house – Jimmy Jeong for Globe & Mail

- Not much left – Jimmy Jeong for Globe & Mail

Radio station gone but car okay – 92.7 Lake FM

- Helicoptor Operations – Jimmy Jeong for Globe & Mail

Ed Kaiser, Edmonton Journal

STREET
MAP

GAS
POWER
WATER
STREET MAP

EDMONTON JOURNAL

Seven pages of wildfires coverage

- Photos, videos, and more stories on edmontonjournal.com web and mobile
- A special iPad/PlayBook section
- Updates on Facebook and Twitter

We've Moved!
HOLE'S at the enjoy centre
More than a store. A destination!
101 Riel Drive, St. Albert • 780-419-6800
HOLESonline.com

ESTABLISHED 1903

Breaking news at edmontonjournal.com

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011

Firefighters extinguish hot spots in a destroyed neighbourhood in southeast Slave Lake on Monday. The town hall and library were destroyed.

DEVASTATION

The town library, Rick MacWilliam, Edmonton Journal

Global
NEWS
EXCLUSIVE

Phone, power, water, gas, (fridge) – iNews 880

Subsequent flooding – Global News

AMATEUR RADIO

- Activated to support the POC
- Team sent to Athabasca Reception Centre
- Loss of communications from Slave Lake
- Team Redirected to Slave Lake
- Established HF, then a VHF backup
- Stood down as communications solidified
- No time to micro-manage – they were on their own

COMMUNICATIONS

- “No system in the world is designed for everyone to be on it at once”
- Blackberry, satellite phone, EOC with 1 phone, lack of situation reports - all became issues
- Total loss of communications at one point (when EOC burned down)
- The importance of amateur radio at that point
- Reprint of The Canadian Amateur article

OVER-ALL

- Over 470 homes and businesses burned
- 40% of the community destroyed
- $750,000,000 in insurable losses
- $279,000,000 uninsurable costs and losses
- Hospital, police station, telephone exchange did not burn!
- 7,000 people evacuated from Slave Lake
- 15,000+ people evacuated to 11(?) reception centres

IN THE LAST 3 YEARS…

- In the last 3 years, Alberta has dealt with
- 1 in 500 year floods,
- Possible haz-mat evacuation of 47,000,
- the most damaging fire in Canadian history,
- the second-largest oil leak in Alberta history
- and numerous severe weather events

FOR YOU

- Disasters are inevitable
- Modern communications still fails
- You will still be needed
- You will have to act on your own – at the direction and in support of others
- You have to know your stuff
- Please take all presentations seriously!

QUESTIONS?